

I am also extremely disappointed that this bill leaves out an important segment of energy suppliers—public power suppliers and rural electric cooperatives, which serve 25 percent of the nation's power consumers. It is only logical that by including the maximum number of market participants in generation of renewable and clean energy production, we best equip ourselves to meet these goals.

I strongly support meaningful energy legislation that will offer more options and better solutions for my constituents and for all Americans. But I will not rob Peter to pay Paul and I oppose this raid on Medicare and Social Security. I am voting against the SAFE Act and I encourage my colleagues to join me.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise to offer comments on H.R. 4, the Securing America's Future Energy Act of 2001. However, first I would like to thank House Science Committee Chairman BOEHLERT and Ranking Member HALL for their leadership in producing a bipartisan energy bill from the Committee.

The first hearing held by the Full Science Committee in the 107th Congress was on the issue of our nation's energy future. It was appropriate that the Committee review closely all portions of the Administration's energy plan in light of the heavy burden placed on the fiscal resources of the federal government because of the \$1.2 Trillion tax cut.

We can all agree that the United States does need to develop a long-term national energy policy. Our nation's energy priorities should remain constant regardless of the changing dynamics of energy supply. However, there are many facets to our nation's energy needs.

This nation is comprised of producer states and consumer states who must work together in order to resolve future energy needs. The energy portfolio for our nation must include fossil fuels, renewables, and nuclear power.

The bill that is before us today is a compilation of several efforts on the part of four separate House Committees to craft a national energy plan. The Science Committee contributed to this effort through enhanced research and development in oil and gas exploration, support of renewable energy, and increased opportunities for new technology on conservation, and a strong support of the environment. Rather than this disregard of the environment, we should work together to protect our precious environment.

I strongly believe that the best approach to our nation's energy needs is one of bipartisan

cooperation with a goal of ensuring long-term commitments to a national energy plan that reducing dependence on foreign sources of energy and enhances our Nation's productivity. For this reason, we must explore the potential that renewable energy technologies have to contribute to fulfilling an increasing part of the nation's energy demand and how that can occur, while increasing the economies, that can be reached through more efficient and environmentally sound extraction, transportation, and processing technologies.

I had an amendment that was incorporated into the final bill offered for inclusion into H.R. 4 that created a Secondary Electric Vehicle Battery Use Program in the Department of Energy. This new program is designed to demonstrate the use of batteries previously only used in transportation applications in secondary applications, including utility and commercial power storage and power quality. The program would also evaluate the performance of these batteries, including their longevity of useful service life and costs, as well as the required supporting infrastructure to support their widespread use.

I found that at the "end-of-useful-life" of a battery system that is used in an electric vehicle (EV), that battery system still retains 80 percent of its initial capacity. However, the battery system is no longer useful in the EV because it has lost power capabilities that are required to run the vehicle effectively. In many electric utility applications, only the capacity from a battery, not capability, is required. This situation presents an opportunity for furthering the use of electric vehicles while finding a secondary market for the batteries used for transportation purposes.

The high vehicle prices for the initial series of electric vehicles, along with a lack of consumer familiarity and limited driving range, have greatly restricted consumer acceptance and prevent successful market penetration. In turn, manufacturers refuse to produce greater numbers of EVs, having reached conclusions that the costs are too high and the market too limited. The cycle of high costs and limited sales is broken only if costs are reduced and/or volume is increased dramatically. While it is estimated that prices for batteries begin to fall when the volume reaches 10,000 packs per year, auto manufacturers believe that volume alone cannot address the prohibitive costs of advanced technology batteries necessary to create consumer demand for EVs because the materials needed for such batteries (e.g., nickel) are expensive. Currently, there are a total of approximately 4,000 EVs on U.S. roads.

To assure volume sales of EVs, a dramatic reduction in the cost of batteries is required. An innovative approach to addressing this issue may be to "extend" the life—or value—of the batteries beyond vehicular use. Once the batteries have been "used" in a vehicle, there is an opportunity to refurbish, then "re-use" the batteries in a stationary application. For example, electric utilities could "re-use" EV battery packs in peak shaving, transmission deferral, back-up power and transmission quality improvement applications. If successfully demonstrated for secondary, stationary-use applications, the effective price of battery systems are projected to make EVs more competitive.

I along with Members of the Congressional Black Caucus have serious concerns regarding the balance shown in the drafting of this legislation. We must be sure to ensure the interest of those who have the least in our society. For this reason, the CBC sponsored a number of amendments to H.R. 4.

Two of these amendments offered were to ensure the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) continues to provide help to those who are the most vulnerable in our society. The first amendment would make sure that all funds expended for LIHEAP in this bill will remain available until used. This amendment also adds report directives to a GAO report being requested to include an assessment of how a lack of energy conservation and efficiency education can impact on energy conservation of program beneficiaries. This amendment would also request that information on the conditions of structures that receive LIHEAP funds could impact energy efficiency.

The initial GAO report only requested information on how LIHEAP funds discourage energy conservation, and asks how direct payments not associated with energy needs may effect energy conservation.

The second LIHEAP amendment would allow program funds to be used to ensure the retrofitting of homes that receive federal assistance. This will address issues of structural problems that often exist in the homes of those who must sustain themselves on limited and often inadequate incomes. This amendment would allow homes in communities to retain their tax value, which would benefit the community as a whole. Often times homes are in need of roof repair in order to be able to place insulation.

Unfortunately, the Rules Committee only found the LIHEAP amendment that produces a GAO study in order for consideration by the full House today. I would like to stress that as we make our nation's energy future more secure, we must make sure that every American household is secure in the fact that they have access to affordable and reliable energy.

I believe that the effects of rising energy prices have had and will continue to have a chilling effect on our nation's economy. Everything we as consumers eat, touch or use in our day to day lives have energy costs added into the price we pay for the good or service. Today, our society is in the midst of major sociological and technical revolutions, which will forever change the way we live and work. We are transitioning from a predominantly industrial economy to an information-centered economy. While our society has an increasingly older and longer living population the world has become increasingly smaller, integrated and interdependent.

As with all change, current national and international transformations present both dangers and opportunities, which must be recognized and seized upon. Thus, the question arises, how do we manage these changes to protect the disadvantaged, disenfranchised and disavowed while improving their situation and destroying barriers to job creation, small business, and new markets?

One way to address this issue is to ensure that this nation becomes energy independent through the full utilization of energy sources within our nation's geographic influence.

Today there are more than 3,800 working offshore platforms in the Gulf of Mexico, which are subject to rigorous environmental standards. These platforms result in 55,000 jobs, with over 35,000 of them located offshore. The platforms working in federal waters also have an excellent environmental record. According to the United States Coast Guard, for the 1980–1999 period 7.4 billion barrels of oil was produced in federal offshore waters with less than 0.001 percent spilled. That is a 99.999 percent record for clean operations.

According to the Minerals Management Service about 100 times more oil seeps naturally from the seabed into U.S. marine waters than from offshore oil and gas activities.

The Nation's record for safe and clean offshore natural gas and oil operations is excellent. And to maintain and improve upon this excellent record, Minerals Management Service continually seeks operational improvements that will reduce the risks to offshore personnel and to the environment. The Office of Minerals Management constantly re-evaluates its procedures and regulations to stay abreast of technological advances that will ensure safe and clean operations, as well as to increase awareness of their importance.

It is reported that the amount of oil naturally released from cracks on the floor of the ocean have caused more oil to be in sea water than work done by oil rigs.

Most rigs under current Interior regulation must have an emergency shutdown process in the event of a major accident which immediately seals the pipeline. Other safety features include training requirements for personnel, design standards and redundant safety systems. Last year the Office of Minerals Management conducted 16,000 inspections of offshore rigs in federal waters.

In addition to these precautions each platform always has a team of safety and environmental specialists on board to monitor all drilling activity.

These oil and gas rigs have become artificial reefs for crustaceans, sea anemones, and small aquatic fish. These conditions have created habitat for larger fish, making rigs a favored location to fish by local people.

I will be offering an amendment later today with Congressman NICK LAMPSON to create a reporting process to access the operation of oil and gas wells off the coast of Texas and Louisiana.

We can all agree that the United States does need to develop a long-term national energy policy. Our nation's energy priorities should remain constant regardless of the changing dynamics of energy supply. For this reason, I hope that the process of completing work on the bill will allow for open debate and honest compromise.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under

consideration the bill, (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 4—The Securing America's Future Energy Act of 2001. This bill will at long last define our national energy policy so that the United States will have an ample, affordable and increasingly efficient energy supply for the future.

It is time that the American people declare independence from foreign sources of energy. We need to develop our own resources and our own technology so that the economy and security of the United States will not be adversely affected by decisions of foreign energy suppliers in the future.

Mr. Chairman, on March 20, 2000, in the 106th Congress, I introduced H.R. 4035, The National Resource Governance Act of 2000 (the NRG Bill). The goal of this bill was to establish a commission that would investigate U.S. dependence on foreign energy sources, evaluate proposals that would make the United States energy self-sufficient, explore alternative energy sources, investigate areas currently not being used for oil exploration and expand drilling in areas such as the Arctic National Wildlife Reserve and offshore. This commission would then submit its findings and recommendations to Congress and the President so that steps could be taken to design and implement a national energy policy.

I introduced the NRG Bill because I believed that our lack of a comprehensive national energy policy would lead to energy shortages and a continued dependence on OPEC. My concerns continued and on November 11, 2000 and again on October 4, 2000, I wrote then-Energy Secretary Bill Richardson to share with him some of my concerns and the concerns of my constituents. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the text of this letter be entered into the RECORD.

NOVEMBER 1, 2000.

Hon. BILL RICHARDSON,
Secretary of Energy,
Forrestal Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: On October 4th, I sent a letter to you asking for your response to reports run in The Wall Street Journal and other media suggesting that crude oil released by the Administration from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) may in fact be diverted to Europe. Assuming that the SPR oil would not be diverted to Europe, I further asked that you reconcile the apparent disparities between the Administration's claim that tapping the SPR would forestall a winter home heating oil crises in the Northeast United States, and independent reports that the SPR oil would not even reach the intended markets until early next year.

I am extremely disappointed that you have not yet responded to these two basic, yet important questions. In my October 4th letter I asked that you provide me with "an immediate assessment" of the aforementioned media reports. I specifically requested that you provide me with a report "early next week" so that I might convey the information to my constituents who are preparing themselves for the onset of winter weather.

Since my last letter to you, officials from your Department have testified to Congress about the President's decision to tap the SPR. I understand that acting Assistant Sec-

retary of Energy Robert S. Kripowicz acknowledged, in one of those hearings, that the release of 30 million barrels of crude oil from the SPR may yield only an additional 250,000 barrels of home-heating oil for the Northeast, including my state of Pennsylvania, which face possible fuel shortages this winter. If Mr. Kripowicz can provide answers to Congress regarding the Administration's recent actions, I fail to understand why an answer to my letter has not been forthcoming.

Mr. Secretary, Pennsylvanians are afraid that the United States has no energy policy. We wonder how long we will continue to be dependent on foreign sources of energy. Unfortunately, your failure to answer basic questions about your Department's actions only serves to confirm those fears. Please provide my office with a response to the questions raised in my letter of October 4th, by November 8th.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE W. GEKAS,
Member of Congress.

Mr. Chairman, my letters went unanswered as did the concerns of so many Americans worried about energy prices, supply, the environment and national security. Unfortunately, my concerns became a reality. This past winter we saw what the lack of a comprehensive national energy policy meant to the people of California as they experienced unannounced rolling blackouts. We also saw the implications of high gasoline and energy prices on our economy. H.R. 4 will define a national energy policy that will avert such situations in the future.

Today, I not only rise to support H.R. 4, the Securing America's Future Energy Act of 2001, but I rise to commend President Bush, Vice President Cheney and the rest of the members of the National Energy Policy Development Group for their leadership in proposing a much needed national energy policy. The development and implementation of this bold and innovative policy will certainly insure that the United States will be less dependent on foreign sources of energy, be more efficient and thus more environmentally sensitive, and will also provide every American with access to ample and affordable energy.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill, (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 4, Securing America's Future Energy Act.

First, let me commend President Bush for his leadership and the committees in the House who have worked on this most important national priority.

Mr. Chairman, gas prices are down, and so far this summer in New Jersey, the lights have